[redacted] NID 81[redacted]

January 19, 1981

BRIEFS AND COMMENTS

EAST GERMANY: Relations with Poland

The East Germans have softened their stance on official contacts with the Poles. [redacted]

[redacted] The East Germans reportedly broke off low-level party relations last month and put official contacts on a par with non-Communist countries. Party leaders will maintain strict operational control over these new relations. [redacted]

East Berlin still will forbid contacts less amenable to party supervision. [redacted] especially vigilant for attempts by Solidarity to establish contacts with any East German enterprise. Contacts with Polish farmers' organizations and student groups as well as exchange programs for workers and vacationing children are also proscribed. [redacted]

These harsh measures toward a "fraternal ally," however, actually mark a slowing in the East German effort to wall itself off from Poland. Almost all ordinary travel between East Germany and Poland has ceased. [redacted]

The decision to increase official relations suggests that the regime is modifying its "isolationist" policy in favor of seeking to change the course of events in Poland or at least to come to terms with it. East Berlin still will be reluctant to resume full political and economic contacts with a "contaminated" Poland. The insecure East German regime will feel threatened by any situation--and it will define this more narrowly than Moscow--in which Solidarity survives as a potentially disruptive force. [redacted]

Approved for Release
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